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STATE OF NEW YORK,  
— • —  
Yorktown Centennial.

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MESSAGE  
OF THE  
GOVERNOR

AND  
REPORT OF THE  
Commissioners of the State for the Reception  
and Entertainment

OF THE  
NATIONAL GUESTS.

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# GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

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STATE OF NEW YORK, }  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, }  
*Albany, January 19, 1882.*

TO THE LEGISLATURE :

Herewith is transmitted for your information the report of the Commissioners for the reception of the National guests, designated pursuant to Senate resolutions, adopted June 21, 1881, in words following :

“ STATE OF NEW YORK,

“ IN SENATE,

“ ALBANY, *June 21, 1881.*

“ WHEREAS, The State of New York during its long  
“ occupation of its chief city was for a long period,  
“ notably in the summer of 1781, and the fall of 1782,  
“ protected and succored by the troops which France,  
“ the ally of the United States, sent to their assist-  
“ ance; and,

“ WHEREAS, After the victory of the allied forces at  
 “ Yorktown, the city of New York remained for a  
 “ period of more than two years in the occupation of  
 “ the British Troops; and in the disorganized condition  
 “ of the State, no opportunity was permitted to it to  
 “ express its recognition of the services rendered by  
 “ the French in protecting its soil and obtaining its  
 “ deliverance; and,

“ WHEREAS, In response to an invitation of the Con-  
 “ gress of the United States, the French government  
 “ has signified its intention of sending a delegation to  
 “ represent it at the laying of the corner-stone of the  
 “ monument to the alliance on the ground of the vic-  
 “ tory; therefore,

“ RESOLVED, That his Excellency the Governor, be  
 “ and hereby is directed and authorized to extend the  
 “ courtesies of the State of New York in such manner  
 “ as he may deem wise and proper, to the Delegation  
 “ of the French Government, the family of Lafayette,  
 “ and the descendants of the Marquis de Rochambeau,  
 “ the Count de Grasse, and of such other general offi-  
 “ cers of the French army and fleet, who served in the  
 “ Yorktown Campaign, as may visit the United States  
 “ during the present summer; and it is further

“ RESOLVED, That his Excellency the Governor, be

“and hereby is empowered to call to his aid such of  
 “the citizens of the State as he may select, to assist  
 “in the reception and entertainment of these honored  
 “guests, and he is hereby authorized to draw his war-  
 “rant on the Treasurer of the State for such moneys  
 “as may be required for the purposes of this resolution.

“By order.

“JOHN W. VROOMAN,

“*Clerk.*”

Although the resolutions in terms authorized the Governor “to draw his warrant on the Treasurer of the State for such moneys as may be required for the purposes of this resolution,” no appropriation having been made for the purpose specified, there was no money available to defray expenses; and it did not appear proper to me, in view of that fact, to authorize any expenditure on behalf of the State. Accordingly, therefore, fifteen citizens, residing in New York city and vicinity, were designated and requested to serve as a Commission of Reception. They were at the same time expressly notified that no liability against the State could be authorized.

The Commission thus appointed, consisted of the gentlemen named, as follows:

JOHN A. KING.	LLOYD ASPINWALL.
FREDERICK W. SEWARD.	HORACE RUSSELL.
HAMILTON FISH, Jr.	ALFRED C. BARNES.
WILLIAM W. ASTOR.	JAMES M. VARNUM.
CORNELIUS VANDERBILT.	FRANCIS C. BARLOW.
ROBERT RAY HAMILTON.	JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS.
WILLIAM JAY.	ROBERT E. LIVINGSTON.
WILLIAM RHINELANDER STEWART.	

The Commissioners cordially and promptly accepted the duty intrusted to them, and devoted themselves assiduously to its discharge, which was accomplished in a manner alike honorable to the State, in whose name they acted, and creditable to themselves as citizens. Indeed, it is becoming to say that their action was in the highest degree worthy of the great State whose hospitalities they were directed to extend to the distinguished guests; and it is my especial desire to bear testimony to their service, so zealously and efficiently rendered in true public spirit. Besides much time devoted by the Commissioners, they personally contributed several thousand dollars for the pay-



ment of hotel bills, carriage hire and other expenses, so that neither for maintenance nor travel were the National guests allowed to expend a single dollar within the borders of our State.

Certainly, it was not contemplated by me, in naming the Commissioners, that they should assume the burden of such outlay; but, as they conceived it to be proper to take it upon themselves, in order to carry out the spirit of the resolutions, it would seem but just that the State should promptly reimburse them. It is, however, due to them to apprise you that several of the Commissioners stated to me that the expenses were incurred without expectation of return, and that they did not desire it. Moreover, two of them at least, have requested that no recommendation looking to their reimbursement should be made. It would nevertheless, be manifestly improper to allow private citizens to defray the expense of entertaining, on behalf of the State, guests coming from abroad in the capacity of National representatives on the invitation of the general government, to be present at the centennial celebration of the triumph of the allied forces at Yorktown. It is, therefore, recommended that suitable appropriation be made

to enable the Comptroller to reimburse the Commissioners for such expenditures as have been properly made by them.

#### YORKTOWN CENTENNIAL.

It seems appropriate, in connection with the foregoing subject, to make brief reference to the representation of the State at the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the surrender of the British forces at Yorktown, last October. Congress appropriated \$100,000 for the erection of an imposing monument on the historical ground where the surrender occurred, and provided for a becoming observance of the centennial celebration, to include the laying of the corner-stone of the projected monument. The general arrangements were intrusted to a committee composed of Senators and Representatives in Congress. Invitations were extended to the French government, and to the several States, requesting formal representation on the occasion; and also, to the descendants of the principal officers of the allied armies. France formally accepted the invitation, and sent a deputation of nearly forty persons, about one-half of whom were lineal descendants of Lafayette, de



Rochambeau, de Grasse and other illustrious officers who participated in our Revolutionary struggle.

The celebration began on the eighteenth of October, lasting three days; and was a successful demonstration. Among those present were: The President and Cabinet, prominent officers of the army and navy, many of the Senators and Representatives in Congress; besides a considerable detachment of regular troops, and a naval force with ships of war. Nearly all the States took some part in the celebration. More than twenty were represented by their Chief Executives, and quite that number were represented by regiments or companies of State troops. The State of New York participated by the presence of the Governor and staff, the Thirteenth regiment, accompanied by Dodsworth's band, a portion of the Sixty-fifth and Seventy-fourth regiments, and the Ninth separate company: as well also, by a large number of prominent citizens. The New York troops presented an excellent appearance, and did great credit to the State by their admirable behavior.

The event was in every way commendable to the country. And the cordial commingling of citi-

zens and soldiers from different sections of the Union on that memorable spot, and at the particular time chosen, should exert a salutary influence throughout our whole domain. The revival of the patriotic memories of the Revolutionary period inspired those present with renewed devotion to the Union; and will, let us hope, promote a new spirit of loyalty for the future.

ALONZO B. CORNELL.

REPORT  
OF THE  
COMMISSION TO EXTEND THE COURTESIES OF  
THE STATE OF NEW YORK TO THE  
GUESTS OF THE NATION.

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TO THE GOVERNOR:

The Commission appointed under the great seal of the State, in accordance with the resolutions of the Senate of the State of New York, authorizing the Governor "to extend the courtesies of the State to the delegation of the French Government, the family of Lafayette, and the descendants of the Marquis de Rochambeau, the Count de Grasse, and of such other general officers of the French Army and Fleet who served in the Yorktown Campaign, as may visit the United States during the present summer, and to such other guests as may be delegated or invited to visit the United States, for the purpose of taking part in the forthcoming celebration at Yorktown," has the honor to submit the following report of its action in obedience thereto:

Organizing on the third of September, immediately after the receipt of your letter of appointment — your

Commission addressed letters of invitation to the several gentlemen invited by the General Government and to those who would accompany them, which were forwarded by the courtesy of the Honorable the Secretary of State of the United States. It afterwards waited upon the Secretaries of State, of the Treasury, and of the Navy, in order to conform its arrangements of reception to the pleasure of the authorities of the General Government. It is the first duty of your Commission to report the cordiality with which these gentlemen accepted its co-operation in the agreeable and honorable duty of welcoming to our shores the distinguished guests of the Nation.

On the arrival of the French steam-frigate *Magicienne* and the *Aviso Dermont d'Urville*, the escort of the expected delegation, under the command of Rear Admiral Halligon of the French West India Naval Station, your Commission visited this officer on board of his ship and was received with courteous ceremony.

A similar visit of welcome was paid to his Excellency M. Max Outrey, Minister of France to the United States, and chief of the delegation appointed to represent the French Government and Nation on his arrival from France, when a renewed tender of the courtesies and hospitalities of the State was formally made and accepted with frank cordiality.

The French trans-Atlantic steamer Canada arrived in the waters of New York bay on the early morning of Wednesday, the fifth of October, having on board the French delegation, the representatives of the family of Lafayette and the descendants of officers who served at Yorktown. The vessel was saluted by the United States fleet assembled on the station, Rear Admiral Wyman commanding on his flag-ship the Tennessee. The French steamer was immediately boarded by the gentlemen of the United States State Department designated by His Excellency the Secretary of State to receive the honored guests in the name of the Nation, accompanied by your Commission. After the ceremony of welcome by the United States authorities, your Commission was presented to the delegation and formally entrusted with their care and entertainment while within the limits of the State of New York. Transferred to a government tug kindly tendered by the United States Treasury Department, escorted by the United States vessels of war in the harbor, and honored by a passing salute from the United States fort at Governor's Island, the delegation was brought to the city and landed at the Battery, where carriages were in waiting to receive them, in which, escorted by the entire Seventh Regiment, New York National Guard, which had volunteered its services on the

occasion, they were driven through Broadway, Fourteenth street and the Fifth avenue, to the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where elegant apartments had been provided for them by your Commission. We recall with satisfaction and pride the general and hearty welcome extended by the citizens of the metropolis to these, the guests of the Nation and of the State.

You will pardon a mention of the presentation of the delegation to yourself, and a reference to the magnificent military review of the First Division of the New York State National Guard, Major-General Alexander Shaler commanding, held by you in person on Thursday, the sixth of October, in the presence of the honored delegation, who were invited guests. The published official report of General Boulanger, chief of the representatives of the French War Department, bears witness to the appreciation the delegation entertains of your courtesy and of the soldierly bearing and precision of movement of the troops reviewed. Here, again, your Commission desire to mention the enthusiasm with which the visitors were welcomed by the population of the city, the entire length of the route from Madison square to Central Park, as they were driven up and down the line.

In the evening, upon the invitation of the Superintendent of the Fire Department, the guests witnessed the



response to an alarm of fire, the execution of which, in all its details, excited their warmest admiration and received special notice in the report already alluded to.

On Friday, the seventh October, the delegation visited West Point. By the courtesy of Admiral Wyman, and with the cordial concurrence of their commanders, the United States gun-boats Vandalia, Captain Meade, and the historic Kearsarge, Commander White, were placed at the disposition of your Commission for this visit. The guests were escorted from the hotel to the river side by the Gardes Lafayette. Admiral Wyman, Major-General Hancock and a number of distinguished citizens accompanied the guests. The vessels sailed up the Hudson on one of the finest days of this beautiful season. At West Point the visitors were received with due ceremony by the Post Commander, witnessed a review of the Cadets of the United States Military Academy, and in the evening were entertained by your commission with a dinner and ball at Cozzens' Hotel.

Saturday, the eighth October, by the courtesy of the President of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad the delegation, escorted by your Commission, was carried in a special train over the lines of the Hudson River and New York Central Railroad to Niagara. The thriving industrial towns on this extensive line were

pointed out to the visitors. At way stations numbers of the inhabitants were gathered and gave welcome. On the journey an elegant collation of fifty covers was served in the cars while in motion at the rate of fifty miles an hour.

Sunday, the ninth October, was passed at Niagara, in quiet contemplation of the majestic grandeur of the Falls. Your Commission must bear tribute to the liberality of the proprietors of the grounds, who, without exception, tendered free admittance; to the directors of the Suspension and other bridges for free passage, and for an evening illumination of the Falls by calcium light.

On Monday, the tenth, by the courtesy of the President of the New York and Erie Railroad Company, the French visitors, accompanied by your Commission, were carried on a special train to Elmira, where they were met by a committee from the city of Baltimore, to whom was confided the charge of the guests. At Hornellsville an elegant breakfast was served in the dining-room of the Erie railroad.

Returned to New York, your Commission was in season to receive the representatives of the family of the Baron de Steuben, Major-General in the army of the United States in the war of the Revolution, who had been

invited by the Honorable the Secretary of State of the United States, to participate in the celebration of the victory at Yorktown. These gentlemen, seven in number, accompanied by His Excellency the German Imperial Minister, Herr Van Schlozer, arrived in the Hamburg steamer Herder, on the morning of the twelfth October. They were received by representatives of the Department of State of the United States, and placed in charge of your Commission with the same ceremony extended to the former guests. Transferred to the United States Steamer Kearsarge, which, under the instructions of the Admiral on the station, awaited their arrival, they were brought to the city under a passing salute from the fort, landed at the Battery and driven to the Fifth Avenue Hotel, where apartments had been arranged for them by your Commission. In the evening, after a dinner given by your Commission, they were escorted to a musical demonstration of German citizens in Union Square, over which the Mayor presided, and thence to Jersey City, where they took cars for Washington.

The French gentlemen and the representatives of the Steuben family returned to New York on the fourth of November. On Saturday, the fifth, they were entertained by the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, at a magnificent banquet of over 200 covers, ten-

dered through the officers of your Commission. A report of the proceedings on this interesting occasion has been published by the Chamber.

On Monday, the seventh of November, the French delegation and the representatives of the family of Baron de Steuben visited the New York Historical Society, in pursuance of an invitation tendered to them. They were received by the officers with formal courtesy, and a large number of the older members were gathered in their honor. The visitors expressed their satisfaction at witnessing the numerous historical relics of the Revolution, portraits of Lafayette painted from the life, numerous letters written by him during the American war and from his Prussian-Austrian prisons, and the manuscripts of Baron de Steuben, especially full on the Yorktown campaign.

Your Commission record with the greatest satisfaction this cordial co-operation of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, and of the New York Historical Society, both chartered institutions of the State, in the courtesies with which it was charged. Later, the extensive and commodious armory of the Seventh Regiment, N. G. S. N. Y., was visited.

On the evening of Monday, the seventh, a grand ball was given in honor of the guests of the Nation at the Metropolitan Casino by your Commission, assisted by

100 gentlemen of the city of New York of the first distinction.

On the evening of Tuesday, the eighth of November, in response to an invitation of M. Outrey, the chief of the French delegation, your Commission met in the drawing-room of the Fifth Avenue Hotel and received a formal acknowledgment of its courtesies, at which the Secretary of State of the United States was present in person. The delegation disbanded the next day, a part taking the steamer for France, others departing in various directions to visit the interior of the United States and Canada.

Friday, the twenty-ninth of December, your Commission, informed by its treasurer that every obligation incurred by it had been discharged, held a final meeting, ordered that a report of their action be addressed to the Governor, with their joint and several thanks for the honor conferred upon them in their appointment, and was formally dissolved.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN A. KING,

*Chairman.*

JOHN AUSTIN STEVENS,

*Acting Secretary.*

NEW YORK, 29th December, 1881.

